

CLAIMS

Amend the claims as follows.

1. – 22. (Canceled)

23. (New) A system comprising:

a language analysis module configured to parse a query into elements and to associate one or more annotations with respective ones of at least some of the elements, a type of each of the annotations being either canonical or conceptual;

a rules engine coupled to the language analysis module to receive the elements and the annotations, the rules engine configured to perform a comparison of a condition of a rule against the elements and the annotations, and to selectively enable an action of the rule based upon a result of the comparison;

a response generator coupled to the rules engine and configured to display information in response to the action; and

wherein the action when enabled selects one of one or more information retrieval technologies to produce the information, and wherein the selected information retrieval technology is configured to search content storage via a semantic index to produce at least a portion of the information.

24. (New) The system of claim 23, further comprising matching ones of the elements against concepts stored in a multi-layered concept repository to produce the conceptual annotations.

25. (New) The system of claim 23, wherein the action specifies one or more of the elements and the annotations as keys used to access the semantic index.

26. (New) The system of claim 23, further comprising associating, via a regular expression language specifying the condition of the rule, a plurality of the elements and the annotations with a concept in a multi-layered concept repository; and

wherein the action specifies the concept as a key used to access the semantic index.

27. (New) The system of claim 26,

wherein the rule is one of a plurality of rules, each of the rules having a respective condition and a respective action;

wherein the selected information retrieval technology is a first selected information retrieval technology, and the at least a portion of the information is a first portion of the information; and

wherein a second one of the actions when enabled selects a second distinct one of the information retrieval technologies, and the second selected information retrieval technology is configured to supply a managed answer as a second portion of the information.

28. (New) The system of claim 27, wherein a third one of the actions when enabled provides a bias requirement, and wherein the response generator is configured to selectively display the information based on the bias requirement.

29. (New) The system of claim 28, wherein the response generator is configured to display the first portion of the information in a first portion of a screen, and to display the second portion of the information in a second separate portion of the screen.

30. (New) The system of claim 27, wherein the managed answer is specified via the one of the rules having the second action.

31. (New) The system of claim 23, wherein the rules engine is further configured to selectively enable the action based on comparing peripheral information distinct from the query against a business condition of the rule.

32. (New) The system of claim 23, wherein the language analysis module is further configured to process the content storage to form the semantic index.

33. (New) A method comprising:
parsing a query into elements;
associating one or more annotations with respective ones of at least some of the elements;
comparing respective conditions of each of a plurality of rules against the elements and the annotations;
selectively firing a respective action of each of the plurality of rules based on respective results of the comparing;
in response to at least one of the firing actions, operating one or more information retrieval technologies to produce respective information;
matching, by at least one of the rules, a plurality of the elements and the annotations to a concept representing an intent of the query, wherein each of the plurality of the elements and the annotations corresponds to one or more words of the query;
searching content storage using the concept as a key to a semantic index as a part of one of the information retrieval technologies; and
displaying the information.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the matching is via a regular expression language.

35. (New) The method of claim 34, wherein the matching determines if at least one of the plurality of the elements and the annotations shares a common ancestor in a multi-layered concept repository with a question example of the at least one of the rules.

36. (New) The method of claim 35,
wherein the one of the information retrieval technologies is a first one of the information retrieval technologies, and
further comprising:
in response to a first one of the firing actions, operating the first information retrieval technology;
in response to a second one of the firing actions, operating a second distinct one of the information retrieval technologies; and

providing, via the second one of the information retrieval technologies, a managed answer.

37. (New) The method of claim 36, wherein the displaying of the information is selectively based on at least some of the firing actions.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising providing by the at least some of the firing actions a bias requirement, and wherein the displaying of the information is selectively based on the bias requirement.

39. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the comparing is via a regular expression language.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the associating is, at least in part, via a multi-layered concept repository producing conceptual ones of the annotations;

41. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein at least one of the firing actions specifies one or more of the elements and the annotations as additional keys used for the searching of the content storage.

42. (New) The method of claim 33, further comprising:
determining a respective relevancy of each of at least some of the firing actions; and
selectively performing each of the at least some of the firing actions based upon the respective relevancy.

43. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein the respective relevancy of a particular one of the firing actions is based on the ones of the elements and the annotations that contributed to the respective results of the comparing that selectively fired the particular firing action.

44. (New) A computer readable medium comprising:
instructions that parse a query into elements;

instructions that associate one or more annotations with respective ones of at least some of the elements;

instructions that compare respective conditions of each of a plurality of rules against the elements and the annotations;

instructions that selectively fire a respective action of each of the plurality of rules based on respective results of the comparing;

instructions that, in response to at least one of the firing actions, operate one or more information retrieval technologies to produce respective information;

instructions that match, via at least one of the rules, a plurality of the elements and the annotations to a concept representing an intent of the query, wherein each of the plurality of the elements and the annotations corresponds to one or more words of the query;

instructions that search content storage using the concept as a key to a semantic index as a part of one of the information retrieval technologies; and

instructions that display the information.

45. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions that match include instructions that use a regular expression language.

46. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 45, wherein the instructions that match include instructions that determine if at least one of the plurality of the elements and the annotations shares a common ancestor in a multi-layered concept repository with a question example of the at least one of the rules.

47. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 46, wherein the one of the information retrieval technologies is a first one of the information retrieval technologies, and further comprising:

instructions that, in response to a first one of the firing actions, operate the first information retrieval technology;

instructions that, in response to a second one of the firing actions, operate a second distinct one of the information retrieval technologies; and

instructions that provide, via the second one of the information retrieval technology, a managed answer.

48. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 47, wherein the instructions that display the information operate selectively based on at least some of the firing actions.

49. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 48, further comprising instructions that provide, via the at least some of the firing actions, a bias requirement, and wherein the instructions that display the information operate selectively based on the bias requirement.

50. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 44, wherein the instructions that compare include instructions that use a regular expression language.

51. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the instructions that associate include instructions that use a multi-layered concept repository to produce conceptual ones of the annotations;

52. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 51, wherein at least one of the firing actions specifies one or more of the elements and the annotations as additional keys used for the searching of the content storage.

53. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 44, further comprising:
instructions that determine a respective relevancy of each of at least some of the firing actions; and
instructions that selectively perform each of the at least some of the firing actions based upon the respective relevancy.

54. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 53, wherein the respective relevancy of a particular one of the firing actions is based on the ones of the elements and the

annotations that contributed to the respective results of the comparing that selectively fired the particular firing action.